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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/416,042	10/12/99	ROBERTS	M 05868-USA

023543 QM61/0917
AIR PRODUCTS AND CHEMICALS, INC.
PATENT DEPARTMENT
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EXAMINER	
DOERRLER, W	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3744	#11

DATE MAILED: 09/17/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/416,042	ROBERTS ET AL.
	Examiner William C Doerrler	Art Unit 3744

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to the 9-10-2001 telephone interview.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 13-15, 19-21, 24 and 26.
3. The drawings filed on 12 October 1999 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

5. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - (a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
6. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

7. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
8. CORRECTED DRAWINGS must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No. _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed _____, which has been approved by the Examiner.
 - (c) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the top margin (not the back) of each sheet. The drawings should be filed as a separate paper with a transmittal letter addressed to the Official Draftsperson.

9. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No. <u>10</u> .
5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449), Paper No. <u>9</u> .	6 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment
7 <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material	8 <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
	9 <input type="checkbox"/> Other


WILLIAM DOERRLER
PATENT EXAMINER
GROUP 3400



EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

12/B
J. J. [Signature]
9/7/01

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with John Fernbacher, applicants' agent, on 9-10-2001.

The application has been amended as follows:

Cancel claims 1-12, 16-18, 22, 23 and 25.

Amend the following claims accordingly:

13. A method for the liquefaction of a feed gas which comprises providing at least a portion of the total refrigeration required to cool and condense the feed gas by utilizing

(a) a first refrigeration system comprising at least one recirculating refrigeration circuit, wherein the first refrigeration system utilizes two or more refrigerant components and provides refrigeration in a first temperature range; and

(b) a second refrigeration system which provides refrigeration in a second temperature range by work expanding a pressurized gaseous refrigerant stream; wherein the first recirculating refrigeration system is operated by
(1) compressing a first gaseous refrigerant;
(2) cooling and at least partially condensing the resulting compressed refrigerant;

(3) reducing the pressure of the resulting at least partially condensed compressed refrigerant;

(4) vaporizing the resulting reduced-pressure refrigerant to provide refrigeration in the first temperature range and yield a vaporized refrigerant; and

(5) recirculating the vaporized refrigerant to provide the first gaseous refrigerant of (1);

[The method of claim 11] wherein at least a portion of the cooling in (2) is provided by indirect heat exchange with one or more additional vaporizing refrigerant streams provided by a third recirculating refrigeration circuit.

19. A method for the liquefaction of a feed gas which comprises providing at least a portion of the total refrigeration required to cool and condense the feed gas by utilizing

(a) a first refrigeration system comprising at least one recirculating refrigeration circuit, wherein the first refrigeration system utilizes two or more refrigerant components and provides refrigeration in a first temperature range; and

(b) a second refrigeration system which provides refrigeration in a second temperature range by work expanding a pressurized gaseous refrigerant stream;

wherein the second refrigeration system is operated by

(1) compressing a second gaseous refrigerant to provide the pressurized gaseous refrigerant in (b);

(2) cooling the pressurized gaseous refrigerant to yield a cooled gaseous refrigerant;

(3) work expanding the cooled gaseous refrigerant to provide the cold refrigerant in (b);

(4) warming the cold refrigerant to provide refrigeration in the second temperature range; and

(5) recirculating the resulting warmed refrigerant to provide the second gaseous refrigerant of (1)

[The method of claim 16] wherein at least a portion of the cooling in (2) is provided by indirect heat exchange with one or more additional vaporizing refrigerant provided by a third recirculating refrigeration circuit.

24. A method for the liquefaction of a feed gas which comprises providing at least a portion of the total refrigeration required to cool and condense the feed gas by utilizing

(a) a first refrigeration system comprising at least one recirculating refrigeration circuit, wherein the first refrigeration system utilizes two or more refrigerant components and provides refrigeration in a first temperature range; and

(b) a second refrigeration system which provides refrigeration in a second temperature range by work expanding a pressurized gaseous refrigerant stream;

wherein the first refrigerant stream is operated by

(1) compressing a first gaseous refrigerant;

(2) cooling and partially condensing the resulting compressed refrigerant to yield a vapor refrigerant fraction and a liquid refrigeration fraction;

(3) further cooling and reducing the pressure of the liquid refrigerant fraction, and vaporizing the resulting liquid refrigerant fraction to provide refrigeration in the first temperature range and yield a first vaporized refrigerant;

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(4) cooling and condensing the vapor refrigerant fraction to provide additional refrigeration in the first temperature range and yield a second vaporized refrigerant; and

(5) combining the first and second vaporized refrigerants to provide the first gaseous refrigerant of (1);

[The method of claim 23] wherein vaporization of the resulting liquid in (4) is effected at a pressure lower than the vaporization of the resulting liquid refrigerant fraction in (3), and wherein the second vaporized refrigerant is compressed before combining with the first vaporized refrigerant.

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26. A method for the liquefaction of a feed gas which comprises providing at least a portion of the total refrigeration required to cool and condense the feed gas by utilizing

(a) a first refrigeration system comprising at least one recirculating refrigeration circuit, wherein the first refrigeration system utilizes two or more refrigerant components and provides refrigeration in a first temperature range; and

(b) a second refrigeration system which provides refrigeration in a second temperature range by work expanding a pressurized gaseous refrigerant stream; wherein the second refrigeration system is operated by

(1) compressing a second gaseous refrigerant to provide the pressurized gaseous refrigerant in (b);

(2) cooling the pressurized gaseous refrigerant to yield a cooled gaseous refrigerant;

(3) work expanding the cooled gaseous refrigerant to provide the cold refrigerant in (b);

(4) warming the cold refrigerant to provide refrigeration in the second temperature range; and

(5) recirculating the resulting warmed refrigerant to provide the second gaseous refrigerant of (1)

[The method of claim 16] wherein the feed gas is natural gas, the resulting liquefied natural gas stream is flashed to lower pressure to yield a light flash vapor and a final liquid product, and the light flash vapor is used to provide the second gaseous refrigerant in the second refrigerant circuit.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C Doerrler whose telephone number is (703) 308-0696. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 6:30-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Henry Bennett can be reached on (703) 308-0101. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7764 for regular communications and (703) 308-7764 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0861.



William C Doerrler
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3744

WCD

September 10, 2001